

My fellow South Carolinians:

Last week/I discussed with you various aspects of the Senate farm bill, which I described as being considerably weaker than the original bill/reported to the Senate floor by the Agriculture Committee. During the past week, the bill was strengthened somewhat by the passage of several amendments/^{are} designed to aid our farmers who/caught in the price-cost squeeze.

On Monday night, shortly before the bill was passed by a vote of 93-2, the Senate adopted two strengthening amendments. I co-sponsored one of these with Senator Stennis of Mississippi. It would guarantee a minimum four-acre cotton allotment for our small cotton farmers/or the highest acreage planted for the three preceding years, whichever is the smaller. This would be done by increasing the national cotton allotment by 100,000 acres/for the sole purpose of establishing minimum cotton allotments. Last week, a similar provision was knocked from the committee bill.

The other amendment, offered by Senator Humphrey of Minnesota, would provide higher price supports for cotton, corn, and wheat/by setting aside larger quantities of these surpluses. This means that, even with flexible supports on the lawbooks, cotton could bring 90 per cent support prices/instead of the 87 per cent level promised by Secretary Benson.

While the Senate did approve these two amendments, I believe it took a step backward when it voted approval of another amendment/ requiring mandatory participation in the soil bank program/before a

farmer can receive price supports. This amendment was passed by a margin of two votes.

The ^{agricultural} bill is now being considered by a free conference committee, which is trying to iron out the differences/between the Senate and House bills.

The Senate has now shifted to consideration of the electoral college reform plan/offered by Senator Daniel of Texas, Senator Mundt of South Dakota, and myself. Our plan has the support of 51 other co-sponsors, plus other Senators who have indicated they will likewise vote for it. In order for the plan to win, however, it must gain the support of two-thirds of the Senators present for the vote, as this is a proposed amendment to the Constitution.

Our plan is being attacked by Senators from the huge metropolitan areas/who wish to have the minority blocs in New York and Chicago/to continue to control our/^{national} elections. As a result of the present system, both national party platforms are drawn so as to cater to the votes of these blocs, thus throwing that state's entire electoral vote to a ^{so-called} liberal candidate/by a slim margin in popular votes.

I believe passage of ^{our} electoral reform plan is one of the most important measures to come before the Congress this year. Its passage will be a great contribution to the American system of government/ because it will reflect for the first time/the will of the people/in our presidential elections.

South Carolinians, especially those residing in the Columbia area, were pleased to learn on Wednesday/that Fort Jackson has been designated as a permanent military installation. Fort Jackson is one of the nation's most important training centers, and it has proved to be a great boon to Columbia and South Carolina. Since coming to

Washington last year, I have had numerous conferences with officials of the Defense Department/requesting permanent status for Fort Jackson. I am glad that the Department has now decided to give this status to both/Fort Jackson and nearby Camp Gordon at Augusta, Georgia.

On Wednesday I attended the State Democratic Convention in Columbia. I was very glad that the Convention decided to recess and to re-convene after the National Democratic Convention in August. *In* That way, the people of South Carolina can see who the party candidates are/and what the platform is/before deciding on a course of action in the 1956 General Election. I hope the national convention can be persuaded to nominate a moderate candidate/and to write a party platform that is not inimical to the views of the South.

That's all the time for this week. I hope you'll tune in/for my next report from Washington. Thank you.

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